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ABSTRACT

Research literature on female achievers has consistently shown that the encouragement of fathers who act as mentors to their daughters is particularly important. To examine the behavior of fathers with their daughters, female junior and senior college students (N=114) completed an 11-page questionnaire about their personal background. Some of the women (N=36) were then interviewed about the significant influences in their lives. Results showed that common themes of father influence emerged, e.g., offering simple companionship, actively teaching, and investing hope in a daughter's career. Results also indicated that fathers can discourage, e.g., over-protect, insist on ladylike behavior to the detriment of competence, and discourage daughters about their math ability. Three factors tend to explain the salience of fathers in the encouragement of daughters: (1) the essential (fathers behave in instrumental ways, making them naturals at mentoring); (2) the developmental (daughters experience the adolescent process of separation-individuation from mothers and thus are favorably inclined toward the father's advice); and (3) the structural (women in society at large are devalued, thus daughters value counsel of fathers more because his occupation almost always has higher social status than mother's). The findings suggest that the father's identification with his daughter carries a message of respect via the assumption of potential equity. (PAS)

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FATHERS AS MENTORS TO DAUGHTERS

Diana Grossman Kahn

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FATHERS AS MENTORS TO DAUGHTERS

by

Diana Grossman Kahn

There has been considerable recent interest in the process of mentoring, as we become aware of what is necessary and perhaps in short supply for the encouragement of women in business and the professions. Today I will share some thoughts with you about mentors and models and I will use these concepts to illuminate the behavior of fathers with their daughters. The research literature on achieving women has consistently shown the encouragement of fathers to be particularly important. Today I will inquire into what it is that fathers actually do, why they do it, and what it is about many of them which makes them good mentors or encouragers. I shall compare fathers' and mothers' relations with daughters in order to highlight the nature of the father's unique contributions to the encouragement of achievement. Finally, I will speculate about the ways in which the particular effectiveness of fathers as mentors might be a product of the social system within which parental roles are enacted.

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The literature on the development of highly achieving women describes two salient preconditions: the example or model of a working mother, and the encouragement of father. Curious. It is not symmetrical. What fathers do and what mothers are is important for the development of the daughter. This reminds us of Talcott Parsons' 1959 dictum, that fathers' and mothers' roles in the family are complementary, not equivalent; the male parent specializes in instrumental functions, or doing, while the female specializes in expressive functions, or being.

Recently psychology has rediscovered fathers. There are new attempts to separate what is necessary or normative, from the situational (and therefore expendable) features of the complementary performances of mothers and fathers. Opposing conclusions have emerged: some researchers have found no significant differences between mothers and fathers in the child rearing behaviors which were measured. They concluded that parents behave similarly irrespective of sex. Others, however, found that Parsons' instrumental and expressive distinction is still a valid description of mothers and fathers, at least on the particular behaviors they measured. Because of this lack of consensus, I felt encouraged to examine these interviews with women college seniors that I will describe today, in order to tease out a deeper qualitative understanding of the encouragement given by fathers of a particular cohort of achieving women.

I am going to conclude that Parsons was descriptively correct about this particular group of parents. I will then inquire how these behaviors of fathers coincide with or differ from those of mothers, and under what

circumstances some mothers act like most fathers. Echoing the research literature of the past ten years, I shall conclude that mothers tend to model, and fathers to mentor. This presentation is an inquiry into why that may be so. Therefore at this point let me set forth some essential differences between mentors and models.

Mentors and Models

What is the difference between a mentor and a model? A dictionary tells us that a mentor is a "wise and trusted counselor." Counsel is "advice given in directing the judgment of another; interchange of opinions as to future procedure; to give advice; to recommend." A model on the other hand is a "standard or example for imitation or comparison."

It seems then that a model merely demonstrates, that is, exists in the eyes of the heholder, while a mentor performs, consciously and overtly, to enlighten, advise, and show the younger person the most effective steps to take toward a goal or a "tangible future," as Erikson put it. The job of a mentor is to acquaint the younger mentee with, and to foster practice in the skills, attitudes and procedures that will help her attain her goals. The mentor gives advice: how to, what it is like, what is the best way to go there, choices to make, pitfalls to avoid, and finally, she may help to connect (make connections) with persons or things that can help the mentee arrive.

Therefore, the model's behavior toward the "shapee" is irrelevant. A model may even be a symbolic figure unacquainted with the modeler. All that is necessary is visibility of the model, some desire on the part of

the young person to be like the model, or to attain the rewards possessed by the model, and finally the conviction that she has abilities similar to this model, so that if she does the same thing, she may in the future have an opportunity to occupy a similar role in the scheme of things. The way it works is that the younger individual thinks: "If she can do it, it can be done: I can do it."

In contrast to this, both the attitudes and behavior of the mentor become important because the mentor is more active than the model, and mentor behaviors are activated by attitudes. For example, if a father thinks that a high level of occupational attainment is appropriate for his daughter, he may express that directly or he may also encourage her through many different actions to develop appropriate skills and to take steps toward that goal.

Any mentor's performance as a mentor will be determined in part by their own experiences and attitudes toward their own achievements or the lack thereof. Thus in mentoring, as in parenting, behavior may be motivated by a desire to pass on a tradition, to continue what is good, or what has been found to work, just as it may have at its source the desire to rectify errors, to learn from mistakes, or to achieve unfulfilled dreams vicariously through the actions of another.

Therefore, I submit that just as the identification, the feeling of joining with the other, and the desire to imitate this model which is experienced by the younger person is central to the modeling process, so too is the process of mentoring impelled by identification on the part of the mentor as well as by the younger person. Thus the young person

participates, through identification with the properties of the model, while the mentor identifies with the younger person as someone who is capable of accomplishment, and therefore worthy of the effort expended to advise her. Mentoring seems to imply some affective investment on the part of the mentor, some degree of choice or voluntary commitment, that goes beyond the mere advising that is part of some job descriptions.

To summarize the contrasts between models and mentors, for modeling to occur the imitator must feel she shares common abilities, and desires to become more like the model. For mentoring to occur, it is necessary that there be mutual commitment to goals, and shared assumptions that the younger person has the basic ability to achieve, and that the mentor is qualified to dispense effective advice. Bearing in mind the mutuality of this commitment, and the investment of self in mentoring, I now turn to the mutual identification of parents and children.

I assume that each parent's particular hopes for the child are relevant to the content of parental encouragement. The parent's identification with the child may affect the child's life plans. The central feature of this definition of parental identification is that there be a strong parental investment in the child such that the parent derives vicarious satisfaction from the experiences, choices, accomplishments, and affective states of the child. Kagan (1958) defined identification as an "acquired, cognitive response"

> the content of (which) was that some of the characteristics of a model belonged to the individual and the individual behaved as if some of the characteristics and affective states of the model belonged to him...(p. 304)

Ideals and attitudes as well as behavior of a parent may influence a child. Bronfenbrenner (1960) wrote:

> ...the child comes to resemble not only what the parent is but what the parent wants the child to be...In short, there are three aspects of the parent after which the child may pattern himself, the parent's overt behavior, his motives, or his aspirations for the child. (p.22)

I have explained the intrinsic connection between identification and mentoring. At the end, I will suggest why identification of fathers with daughters is important, and it rests upon this connection between mentoring and identification. Before I tell you more about these hopes and identifications, I need to describe their source.

METHOD

This exploratory study was conducted during the Spring of 1975 at a small midwestern liberal arts college with high academic standards. Participants were 114 junior and senior women, which represented one-third of those classes. The data for the present study were gathered as part of a larger study of late adolescence, which provides a base for further longitudinal research to trace individual themes and sex role predictions through successive life stages. This highly verbal, intellectual group of women was chosen for study because of their expressive resources, keenness of observation and capacity for insight. They were well able to articulate the subtleties they percieved of parental attitudes.

As members of the classes of 1975 and 1976 they were a cohort of young women who had experienced the impact of the women's movement early in their adult lives. They had been exposed to a common college culture during a time when the ethos of the '60's was still a part of their personal histories and when the discoveries of consciousness-raising were first shared.

The group under study was preponderantly middle class, and the very few black and oriental women in the sample tended to be similar to others in the same socio-economic class. I do not know how applicable the mechanisms of father as mentor are to minority women, but I hope that as my inquiry centers on qualities in relationship, the findings may be of some use beyond the narrow band of class and race in this particular study.

Instruments

All participants filled out an eleven page questionnaire about their hopes for the future, the education and occupation of parents, relationships with parents, and attitudes of parents toward them as they preceived them. Thirty-six women were interviewed concerning the significant influences in their lives.

Data Analysis

Initially the typed protocols of the thirty-six interviews were explored for ideas about the nature of parental encouragement, and for answers to the question of why fathers were cited in this regard so much more often

than mothers. It was found that women who were positive about the value of marriage and children were likely to have fathers who were active in encouraging their daughters, and who were described as grooming them for achievement in specific actions.

The entire group of questionnaires was then coded. Data derived from this coding strongly confirmed the initial impression and so I returned to the interviews in order to fasten specifically upon what it is these fathers did.

Please bear in mind that I am not speaking today in the usual social science way of using a sample from which to make generalizations about particular populations. Rather view it that I have enlisted the assistance of some highly articulate and reflective women, a particular group in time and historical circumstance, to share with me their experiences around this topic. I present their ideas along with some reflections and interpretations of my own. This is an exploratory venture, not for the purpose of discovering how many people do what, but rather to discover the quality of the father-daughter experience of these particular women, and to speculate about the relation of this experience to women's competence and achievement.

WHAT FATHERS DO

I will first discuss the mentoring activities of fathers as gleaned from semi-structured interviews with 36 of these women. The interview was designed to elicit a thorough base of information about the women's career and family plans, the origin of her interests, and the messages received from parents and other significant adults about appropriate roles in life.

Daughters were also asked to describe the significant influences upon them, role models of importance, and people who encouraged them.

Common themes of father's influence emerged. They were:

1. Offering simple companionship.
2. Actively teaching: Development of skills, attitudes and procedures that would be useful in the world of work.
3. Promoting the daughter's sense of identity as an active, adventurous, or achievement oriented person.
4. Setting high standards: High abilities should be actualized in educational and occupational attainments.
5. Investing hope in daughter's career.
6. Giving explicit counsel about vocational selection.

1. Companionship.

Companionship can easily be underestimated as an encouragement to career aspirations in daughters. By companionship is meant doing active things together particularly joining the father in the kind of active, cultural, outdoor, or fix-it activities which he may enjoy and engage in by choice.

Companionship is not a dutiful Sunday family outing to a museum, but rather a trip to a museum by a father who cares deeply about what he is going to see, and who shares this enthusiasm with his daughter. This kind of companionship, of doing something together can be an experience which emphasizes competence, challenge, the production of an object, or the completion of a task. In this way "mere" companionship can be underestimated, because what is also going on the the gaining of skill and the sharing of an identity as workers, or novice and teacher. For example, one young woman remembers helping her father in his electronics and woodshop. When in college, she went on to major in a laboratory science

and completed an honors project which required mechanical skill in equipment and running the experiment. Doing things together promotes a mutual feeling of having something in common, or identification, which I described in regard to mentors. If a young women hikes and works in the garden or on wood projects with her father, his skills become less mysterious to her. From such mutual activities she develops a general assumption that she can do whatever he can do.

2. Actively teaching skills, attitudes and procedures.

These interviews provide many examples of fathers who teach their daughters skills especially in math and sports, as well as encouraging the acquisition of such skills. The specific attitudes that are encouraged are a willingness to take risks and to compete to win. One woman said:

> I can remember my father encouraged me to play with whatever I wanted to...my grandparents lived... along the seashore. It was always great fun for me to go jumping from these huge rocks. ...I would have a fine time, just jumping around there and he would be encouraging me to climb up some of them, the harder places...And to show me things in the pools and so on. And to fish them out and explore them and look at them. If I got dirty, I got dirty.

Another women described a more extreme training course because her father wanted her to have "true grit":

> He used to pay me money to see how many laps I could swim. And I remember when I was eight, I swam 40 laps... He wasn't deliberately cruel...He just wanted to put some true grit into his daughter. I remember once I was trying to learn how to get up on one ski water skiing, and he told me I wasn't allowed to get out of the water until I did it. Well, I fell down 22 times. I wasn't allowed out of the water. But (I think) if I had been allowed out of the water, maybe next time I would have given in.

The encouragement of fathers obviously ranges from casual permissiveness

in risk taking behavior, to the more extreme conscious training described above. Here is a more moderate example of a father's interest:

> He wanted me to learn to ski because he liked to ski. He wanted me to learn to play tennis. I would say that he was probably a lot more interested in my math homework than anything else I was doing in school, maybe beacuse that was his area that he could help me with. But it got to the point that I didn't ask him for help because he would give me such long and involved explanations that he didn't really help me in the way I wanted.

This example reveals one danger inherent in active teaching and that is the father's over-identification with the daughter, or inability to see her as a separate person.

This brings us to the third theme in which a father extends some part of his sense of his own identity to include his daughter.

3. Promoting a sense of identity.

Identification is a two-way process including both father and daughter, so that the result is the mutual feeling that a quality or achievement is shared. The father may find vicarious pleasure in his daughter's achievement, and identify with her out of pride. He may pull the daughter into his own activities or identity by suggesting that they are a team, either in the performance of tasks or the sharing of values. One woman reported a special closeness with her father when the family had to move and the mother was unable to help, leaving the father and daughter to accomplish the move together:

> My father and I went back to Texas and packed up the house. And that was a real special time--I had my father all summer.
>
> It was a real chummy compatible thing. I learned a whole ritual of getting into the car and locking the door and locking the seat belt -- we were companions in

> that ritual. I really felt like my dad and I had been doing this together.
>
> And he's a really venturous man. I remember when we went through someplace where glider planes were being--he wanted to explore so we drove up there. He made me put on a pack that the glider pilots wear--it must have weighed a ton--and took a picture of me--gruesome thing.

The passage conveys a clear picture of a "venturous man" casting his daughter in an adventurous role.(It does not sound as if he succeeded in inspiring her. However, I am only describing what fathers do, to try and encourage their daughters.) It is clear to the daughter, however, that he did inspire her with the desire to marry someone like him. She reported how she named her imaginary boyfriend after him, extolled his good looks and pleasant manner to her friends. She stated that while she had earlier reacted against his persistent remarks about the specialness of their family, she had become more favorable to it recently, and now associates it with her choice of a career in an art form. This is an example of a father who repeatedly communicated his ideas about the nature of their shared identity. Yet the daughter carefully selects which part of this identity she wishes to buy into.

4. Setting high standards.

The setting of standards was mentioned by almost a third of the women in response to a question about their father's attitude to them. Setting standards seems to be experienced not only as a push or demand, but also as an explicit statement about the level of her abilities and the value placed upon them. It also suggests the appropriateness for the daughter of a high level of occupational aspiration. Fathers were quoted as wanting a daughter to "do something worthy of my intelligence," or as judging certain occupations insufficient for a daughter because they are "not fit occupations

for an intelligent mind." Another daughter said casually "he thinks I'm great." The value placed on a daughter's ability is expressed by less educated parents as a desire for their child to attend college.

Many fathers express the expectation that daughters will attain some kind of vocational distinction, even if they do not yet know what it will be. Other fathers have explicitly communicated the assumption that the daughter will "work her way through the world," rather than be cared for by others. Another daughter described her father's expectations:

> I've pretty much gotten the impression from him that I should have no limitations...Part of that is being the oldest child in a family where a son didn't come along until the fourth child, so when he needed help raking the leaves or doing anything, there was no possible male-female differentiation for the kids because the first three of us were all girls. And I especially as the oldest one felt as if he expected me to take responsibility and do the best I could and try things and not wait for some male to come along and do them.

> One thing that I think is different from the relationships I think my friends have had with their fathers--I never felt like a little girl with him and I've never developed a way that a lot of people I know have with their fathers--flirting with him and teasing him, getting what I wanted. I was always a little bit afraid of him but I definitely felt like I was a person to him and not a girl.

Other women also found it encouraging that their parents had similar standards for girl and boy children. On the other hand, two women expressed anger at noticing there were different standards for themselves and their brothers. What did they do with this rage? Both insisted upon achieving beyond the brother, seizing the more demanding standard as their own, regardless of the father's values. However, it must be remembered that this group is a highly achieving one. One can obviously be motivated for achievement by non-sexist standards, or by reaction against

sexist standards, but we do not know how many women did not rage, and how many accepted the lower standard for themselves, thereby failing to achieve their potential. (Like Shakespeare's sister whom we never heard about until Virginia Wolff invented her, the less achieving sisters who did not take the contrasting standards for males and females as a challenge, but who acquiesed to the easier standard, may have been left at home never to appear in a study of highly achieving college women.)

5. Investment of hope in the daughter's career.

There are many ways of expressing hopes for the working future of daughters which indicate that the father will feel intense vicarious pleasure at the thought of this future. Such expressions of hope indicate the father's identification. On the other hand, arising out of her identification with him, a daughter may undertake a mission, partially on his behalf which involves either continuing some investment he has, or making restitution through her career accomplishments for something he wished to do but did not succeed in completing. Sometimes it is the parent whose actions explicitly assign the daughter to undertake such a CONTINUATION MISSION, that is to be a "chip off the old block" or to make a RESTITUTION MISSION, to compensate the parent for lost hopes by doing what the parent has not done, but would have liked for himself. In other cases, it is the daughter who assumes either a continuance or a restitution mission on her own initiative, based upon the information she has about family values, achievements, and thwarted plans. Of course it is the parents who supply this information.

Sometimes the continuation is not of a specific career, but of a tradition of satisfying occupation based upon the notion that one should

use and challenge the intellect. More explicit continuation hopes were expressed by several other fathers in attempts to interest their daughters in work related to their own. For example, one woman stated:

> It's really hard to tell (what he wants). This has just come out recently. It's really very interesting to me because I never knew about it. It seems to be so important to him. He's a businessman and he went to Stanford Business School. He started his own business. He's never really talked to me about business except he let me come with him on some business trips and he was very interested that I learn his computer stuff. And I was interested in what goes into forming a company and we would have conversations about that but I was never really involved, I was also interested just as a means of finding out about him. He got the impression that I wanted to go to business school. He's mentioned to me that I should think about going to Stanford Business School.
>
> Recently he's been sending me a magazine--it's called Executive or something that was all about women in business. And he sent me a pamphlet about Stanford Business School and he's making it quite obvious that that's what he's interested in.

This daughter appreciated her father's interest, but did not seem swayed by his opinions. That is, a parent may attempt to assign a mission, but it can be refused by the daughter.

Here is an example of such a restitution mission which is assigned by a father but not taken up by the daughter. She stated, "I think he feels he has failed to fulfill his own personal promise: he hopes I will fulfill mine as he sees it." She does not take up his particular ambition, but appears to be stirred by his example that vocation is a meaningful problem that she must solve. She stated:

> I'm trying to work out a life for myself but I haven't really found a model yet. So I don't know what it's going to look like. So it's very fearful to know what I don't want and yet not be able to see what it is that I'm going to have.

Other interviews also show that a father's dissatisfaction with work can spur the young woman to plan on an occupation on a more demanding (and rewarding) level than her father. Here is an example where this restitution mission is both assigned and assumed. This woman reported that her father hopes that she will not "waste herself," and also mentions that her father is "stuck with a job he hates." Her goal is to teach in the humanities on the college level, whereas her father is a high school librarian with similar interests. She thereby continues the area of interest, while attempting to avoid his experience of frustration by attaining a higher degree than he. Thus the expression of frustration on the part of the father often serves to promote thinking about the work world and the rectification of what is identified as his mistake (not living up to his full potential, as implied in waste, or in settling for a lower level job than the original ambition). Another woman reports that she is in total agreement with the assignment of both her parents to avoid early marriage, because it was that which interfered with her father's pursuing a career in the arts, because he had to pursue a more lucrative job in order to support his large family.

6.Giving explicit counsel about vocational selection.

Three types of explicit mention of particular jobs were found in these interviews: 1) grandiose ideas, or "flaming firsts," 2) general ongoing discussion of what the daughter will do for a living that uses observations about friends and public figures, and 3) specific occupational prescriptions based on assessment of interests and abilities of the daughter (what every good guidance counselor should do).

First an example of grand ideas which seem to arise out of a father's own need to accomplish great things:

> When I was in high school, he would come home and say, "I've decided what you should do." "I want you to learn how to fly an airplane." "I don't know many girls that fly and you should be a woman pilot."
>
> I never got into that. "I've decided what you should do. I'm going to send you to France and you're going to learn how to be a great che in some great restaurant." You know, something like that.

The interviewer inquired how she felt in response to these suggestions. She answered, "How did I feel about it? All those plans. I thought he was nuts." She admitted, however, that it was nice in a way to be the recipient of this attention, which was focused on the child in the family in whom the father had the greatest confidence at the moment. I think that these grand suggestions might at least serve as some indication of respect for abilities. Yet there is good reason to believe that more realistic suggestion would better serve this purpose. She also reported:

> I think he has given me mixed messages because at the same time as he pushed me, wanted me to do all these great things--at that same dinner conversation he was telling me that I should do this, that, the other thing--he'll say "Women are irrational." I would never want to be judged by a women judge when she has her period."

This daughter was sensitive to the contrast between his ambitions for her to bring him reflected glory, and his generally low estimation of women; this demonstrates how individual encouragement as an exception promotes ambivalence: since I am a women, am I not also imcompetent? she is compelled to wonder.

There are many examples in these interviews where a father is an effective guidance counselor, where his prescription is not based on himself and what he does, or would have liked, but based on a realistic picture of his child's assests and abilities, combined with the knowledge

of the work world. For example one woman reported:

> This is really funny. When I was still in grade school, he was telling me that I should be an architect; and I never paid the slightest attention to him as far as I know. He thought I'd be a good architect because I liked math and I liked art, and he thought they went together neatly... As far as architecture goes, I don't know how relevant either one of those things are. But anyway he thought that that would be just great.

As far as she knew, she told us, she did not pay the slightest attention. Yet in college, she independently arrived at the same conclusion.

Another woman recounted an early vocational prescription which was based on her abilities, and also taught her about her father's view of sex equality:

> When I was in elementary school, like most girls, at one point I said that I wanted to be a nurse. And my father asked my why I didn't want to be a doctor. I said because girls are nurses. I'm sure I got that from watching TV and just all sorts of thing. My father said, No, girls can be doctors too. Doctors do more than nurses. They do all the important things. He's always told me, from the time I was about 8, that I should be a doctor. He thought I should be a doctor because I like kids and like working with people.

In summary of vocational prescriptions, the grandiose ideas, the ongoing discussion, and the prescription based on a keen knowledge of the individual and of occuaptions, in reality often fade into one another. The importance of the ongoing discussion is twofold: the general assumption is communicated that the young woman <u>has</u> a vocational future, and also there is an opportunity for feedback and sharing of information, and the furthering of thinking which discussion enriches. A few examples are found in these interviews where a father uses his knowledge of his daughter's personality, interests, and skills to produce very trenchant occupational advice. This is combined with his knowledge of his friends and associates, of what it takes to succeed in and enjoy different occupations.

Discouraging Fathers

So far I have focused on the positive. Fathers also can discourage in the following ways: over-protection, insistance on ladylike behavior to the detriment of competence, or failure to invest in a daughter because of dissappointment in her gender. Some fathers discouraged their daughters by telling them they were not good at math, or that they were working too hard, "getting carried away" with their schoolwork.

Just as treating sons and daughters differently could have encouraging or discouraging effects, intense interest in the daughter's schoolwork sometimes boomeranged. Two women reported that they avoided math ever since their fathers screamed at them while helping them with math homework in elementary school. The over-intense encouragement of competition by fathers also had some liabilities. It appears that if the father goes too far over the line between grooming the daughter to stand up to competition, and becoming deeply competitive with her himself, she is likely to generalize this competitive challenge to all men, and to be unable to relate to them on any other basis, on any occasion. Finally, there were a small minority of "minimalist" fathers, whose relations with daughters seemed to be characterized by distance, lack of interest, and lack of knowledge about one another.

To summarize what fathers do, I would like to call to your attention to the unifying theme of respect for daughters' capacities and the assumption of their potential equity and equivalence with fathers' attainments. This goal is accomplished through a variety of actions which have in common the invocation of a team spirit, a feeling of commonality, or shared identity.

Comparing Fathers and Mothers

I will now summarize the impression of mothers' encouragement gained from these same interviews in order to highlight the behavior of fathers by comparison. The first three categories I described for fathers involved sharing: of companionship, skills, and sense of identity. The mother shares whatever she does and is; the companionship often had a different context, such as the kitchen rather then the workshop. Mothers were seldom described as teaching skills, and hardly ever as setting high standards or promoting an adventurous identity.

Occasionally mothers too give vocational prescriptions and express their hopes in their daughter's future. However, the families in which mothers alone, or mothers more than fathers do this, are those in which the mother has a higher status educational degree or profession, and therefore might know more about such things, or would be expected to be responsible for them within the family.

Both parents may express the hope that the daughter accomplish through her vocation something they were unable to do. Fathers more often than mothers express discontentment with their jobs and thereby create a concern about selecting the right occupation. However, fathers are more likely to actively try to get the daughter to somehow continue in the paths they have found, while mothers are more likely to inspire the daughter to make restitution for what the mothers were unable to do. However, fathers express their wishes for continuance directly in overt ways. In the case of mothers, it is more often the daughters who take it upon themselves of their own initiative to undertake the mission of restitution, for mothers do not often overtly request this.

When we attempt to compare fathers with mothers, we encounter the problem in the interpretation of research findings that the same action may have different meanings, depending on who does it. The same encouragement may be received differently by some daughters depending on whether the advice giver or mentor is educated or successful in a career or not. In other words, the effect of encouragement depends upon whether the mentor is also a model of the counseled behavior or a negative model of what to avoid.

Restitution and continance inevitably reflect the social system in that there is a preponderance of restitution messages from mothers, and continuance from fathers. It is not surprising that the occupationally advantaged sex more often perceives their lives as worth continuing in the occupational sphere, whereas daughters assume more restitution missions on the basis of mothers' lives when cultural norms have promoted the underutilization of women in occupations, or an imbalance between women's high educational level, and low occupational level.

I will read some excerpts from the transcripts of two women which illustrates how the influence of each parent comes together in a total picture, and which also show how the higher value placed by society on the occupation of the male parent, and the devaluation of the woman within the family can affect the quality of each parent as model or mentor. The following excerpt illustrates the lesser value accorded the mother and her advice when her occuaption is of lower status than that of the father. This daughter preceived her mother as having changed a good deal in the past few years since she went from her original career of nursing, through an advanced degree, and then became a teacher of nurses. Her father was a

business executive. For most of her life, she reported, she had viewed her mother as "limited." She had despised girls of her own age for being, as she described, "silly" and "weak." However, since her mother returned to work when she was in high school, she had evolved a different attitude towards her mother's life. At the same time, she reported, she became aware of feminism and realized that women were innately silly and weak, but were encouraged to be so. This daughter's description of the kind of support she sought from each parent was informative on the issue of paternal mentoring and maternal modeling. She always depended upon her father for encouragement. She stated:

> My father is very supportive and I am beginning to realize more and more that this has a lot to do with making me what I am today...(It was he who made me) aware of the fact that I was intelligent and I should do something that was worthy of my intelligence.
>
> I guess when I have a problem that has to do with my progressing in the world and achieving, I would go to my father before I would go to my mother. I think its because I see him as having gone through this and my mother not so much. She is a nurse, it is true, but nursing is not really into the world. Nurses are put in their place so much, as it is. And its such an accepted profession for a woman to go into. But my father has been through the mill.
>
> I'm talking to my mother now a lot more than I used to. I don't think I used to go to my mother with problems. My mother to me was very much a mother in the sense that she was comforting and nice to me and things like this. Well, when it came to my achievement, I went to my father.
>
> I'm talking to my mother much more now because I realize that she's changed because of the fact that she's teaching now. She's much more in the world. She's really changed a lot. The fact that she's gone back to school--she went back to school and she went back into teaching, (which) has opened up a lot of horizons for her. She didn't work all through while I was going to school until about the middle of my high school years. She's changed a lot and I can talk to her about medicine and things like that.

This young woman has chosen medicine as a career which she may view as a more "in the world" profession than that of her mother. It is also noteworthy that she is going to a higher status level while replicating the field of her mother's professional interest. The foregoing quotation illustrates the particular importance of paternal encouragement if the mother is perceived as not strong enough to succeed in the "real world."

Here is another case which shows different responses of the daughter to each parent. Her father is retired from a profession requiring a Ph.D.; the mother still works in a female-dominated profession at the M.A. level. The daughter stated that she is her father's "alter ego," and explained that he has always strongly identified with her academic interests. There seemed to be a shared assumption that they are somehow an intellectual team. She stated:

> My father expects a hell of a lot from me in the sense of academic things and career achievement. My mother has told me several times and I think it is true that my father expects me to do all the things that he never had time to do. The one thing my father says repeatedly that it's nice that I have taken all the courses in college that he never took and between us we have taken everything, and so whatever he doesn't know, I know, and vice-versa.
>
> I know my father wants me to be successful in my career. My only problem is in trying to figure out how successful does he want me to be. Does he want me to win a Nobel prize, or does he just want to be able to say, My daughter is a lawyer? I can't figure that out yet. How much is enough?

It must be emphasized that the daughter's tone expressed appreciation, indulgence and amusement rather than resentment as she described these wishes of her father. These wishes were apparently negotiable; she did not feel compell to go to X school because he wanted this, rather there was some flexibility as to what she could choose within the accepted frame-

work of his values. Since he had attained the highest degree in his field, she considered only occupations on the same educational level. In this case it could be interpreted that the woman enjoyed accepting a mission to continue her father's standards, and to do something worthy of him.

The foregoing articulate description aroused the interviewer to prove further into the origins of such father-daughter teamwork. The following is an excerpt from the interview transcript:

Interviewer: And how did he treat you when you were little? Did he push you in some way?

Participant: No, he didn't push me.

I: Did he encourage you in some way?

P: No, he didn't encourage me?

I: What did he do?

P: Not much.

I: What do you mean?

P: Well, we used to when I was really little, before junior high, we used to work in the garden together; we used to go on hikes together. Thinks like that, physical things.

I: How did he use to treat you when you were little?

P: Well, my father is--he is getting better--but until he was about 50 he was very quiet. And also when I was growing up he was working in a job situation which was giving him ulcers, and he could not stand it, and he did not talk to anyone. He is a very internal person.

He got ulcers. Everyting just goes inside. He did not talk to anyone, let alone me. Now we talk all the time. When I get home for a weekend I don't think my father and I stop talking to each other for five minutes. I feel now that he respects me a lot.

Apparently there was a change in the father's behavior as she came to adulthood, and as retirement left him more relaxed and with fewer challenges of his own, he became more focused on those of his daughter.

We may wonder along with the interviewer whether the team assumption was quietly held by this quiet man years ago as he hiked with his young daughter. She mentioned earlier in the interview that a minor physical handicap prevented the mother from walking long distances, and that was why she was often her father's hiking companion.

Finally there is found in this woman's interview transcript a passage which reveals a clear connection between the father's disrespect of the mother's achievements, and the daughter's intense concern and determination to measure up to his standards and thereby win his respect.

When asked about the relationship of her parents, she stated that she was bothered by the fact that her father is home all day, yet her mother found it very hard to persuade him to take on any household responsibilities. The daughter stated:

> Oh, God, (it is) such hard work, like pulling teeth to train him to do all these little things without being asked. And that really bothers me. And I don't think he respects my mother as an intellectual, as a competent career woman. I know he doesn't. He's always putting down what she does. One reason I felt a lot of pressure I think to go into the sciences was that my father felt that sociology and anthropology and group therapy are just such bullshit, that they weren't fit occupations for a good mind. So I guess I felt a lot that although I was interested in psycholinguistics, for example, that that was not meaty enough.

The foregoing case histories illustrate how the heightened evaluation of father's opinion and relatively depressed evaluation of mother's opinion by a daughter may be causally related to the different social status of father's and mother's occupation. We then wonder, what if all things were equal? Supposing mother's and father's occupations had equal social status? I turn next to this question, which will lead us to a consideration of qualitative

differences between maternal and paternal behavior as perceived by daughters

Can different be equal?

I have been wondering for a long time about differential parental functions. It seemed to me that to be a model of achievement, as well as to offer the encouragement to achieve is not intrinsically tied to either sex. I was certain that in regard to this issue (just as it had been discovered in other aspects of the psychology of women through the last decade) the conclusions about which parent did what rested not on biology or necessarily sex-specific personality traits, but on the way society had choreographed male and female to divide the instrumental and expressive functions. By this I mean not only the distribution of parental roles but also, as suggested by Jean Baker Miller (1976) and the systems theorists, that mothers and fathers exchange specialized functions of personality. Typically the woman expresses emotions that the man cannot express for himself on his own behalf.

It appeared to me that there was confusion expressed about the normative and the necessary as recently as 1973 in a review of literature on the antecedents of achievement in women which stated:

> ...identification with the mother by female children appears to be antagonistic to achievement orientation unless the mother is an atypical model, that is, unless she does not conform to traditional feminine role definitions. (Stein, 1973, p.363)

This appeared to me to be a strange and tautological statement. It could as well be stated as follows: In the typical pattern of the relative achievement of middle class couples, mothers are less achievement oriented. Sexism in motion tends to remain in motion unless the mother is atypical, that is, unless the situation was equitable rather than sexist in the first place.

Therefore I hypothesized that if women had as much power as men in the world, as indicated by the usual indices of social status, earning power, occupation and education, they would be likely to play the same kind of mentoring role with their daughters. There is a good deal of evidence to support this hypothesis; when demographic variables of education and occupation are similar for mothers and fathers, their behavior is more likely to be similar. Yet there are important qualitative differences in the descriptions of mothers and fathers. These qualitative differences are sometimes hard to capture in research instruments, and hard to "hold constant" (or assess what "all things being equal" might mean when all things will never be exactly the same), and yet we must take them into account, because of their importance and complexity of their impact. The question of whether different can be equal presents two main problems for research. First, the same behavior may have different meaning to the recipient, depending upon the gender who performs the action. Second, behavior which is superficially or apparently different on the part of the male and female parents may have similar motives and therefore effects. A daughter may receive the message that she is competent from the fact that her mother refrains from activity, and from her father because of his activity.

Here is an illustration of the problem of how to compare descriptions of mothers' and fathers' attitudes; a separate vocabulary appeared to be used for mothers and fathers, which suggests that there are different dimensions of apprehension by their daughters. Fathers were described in terms of active grooming for achievement: "He teaches me things," or "He sets high standards for me." This was the modal description for fathers in the entire group. Mothers were most often described as loving, respectful and supportive. Where mothers actively encouraged achievement, they were described differently from

fathers, e.g.: "Wants me to get ahead, and sees me as an extension of herself," or " wants all her children to make a mark on the world," or "wants me to be great." Fathers were described in terms of their actions, while mothers were described in terms of their wishes, or in words which suggest connection, or identification. I will discuss the meaning of this contrast between the actively standard setting father and the identifying mother a little later.

I have described the differences in the attitudes of males and females as parents. What is the meaning of these differences? Fathers are largely instrumental. As mentors, they do things, they set standards, and actively teach the skills and attitudes related to work competence. Mothers were more often described as engaging in gentler, less intrusive forms of encouragement, such as giving love, trust, and support and as engaging in the expressive activities of identifying and hoping. "They also serve who only stand and wait" is apt.

My interpretation of this difference rests on psychoanalytic accounts of the difficulties and necessity of separation and individuation of daughters from mothers. This leaves the father with greater freedom to suggest and advise because his advice is not experienced as threatening to her sense of autonomy. Apparently one very enhancing position for mothers to take vis-à vis daughters is a letting go, a loosening of the infantile attachment and control, a <u>trust</u> that they are competent to find their own way. Thus mothers may more often model and not mentor, because the instrumental activities of mentoring by a mother may be <u>received</u> by the daughter as indications of <u>lack of trust</u> in her competence. This suggests that it is not necessarily the female parent's "nature" which prevents direct advice, but it is the need

of the recipient to achieve independence from the mother as an advisor, because it is the mother who has been the primary caretaker from infancy. Therefore father's advice is more welcome. It may be less threatening to daughters to accept counsel or mentoring from fathers than from mothers. Chodorow stated that in contrast to the early infant-mother unity, the father has always been recognized as a separate person, and therefore the relationship with his daughter is likely to be less intense because "it does not concern whether or not she is a separate person." (p. 127)

Yet it is interesting that in this striking sex difference in parenting behavior is also an underlying commonality of the message. The pride, love and trust extended by the mother and the mentoring by the father are received by the daughter as the same message: "You are competent." Mothers often express this message by giving the growing girl approval and space, while fathers express the notion that the daughter is competent enough to be on his team, and proceeds to behave as if he were her coach.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Why Fathers Mentor

First I will summarize the reasons why fathers are effective mentors. Then I will comment on the function of identification in mentoring by fathers. I shall identify three different kinds of factors which explain the salience of fathers in the encouragement of daughters: the essential, the developmental, and the structural.

1. Essential. Fathers tend to behave in instrumental ways. This makes them "naturals" at mentoring to the extent that the activities of a mentor coincide with what they tend to be interested in: the teaching of skills, setting

of standards, and the development of instrumental competence. As persons who themselves have been socialized for achievement, they naturally tend to reproduce this experience by enacting the reciprocal role of socializer.

Burlingham (Chodorow, 1979) has noted that:

> "fathers see babies not as babies but as potentially grown-up--that they are more likely than mothers to transform their perception of their newborn into fantasies about the adult it will become, and about the things they (father and child) will be able to do together when the infant is much older. " (p.81)

This observation sheds light on the capacity of fathers to encourage achievement behavior, because of their interest in envisioning the future, rather than joining the child in the present. It also relates to the interview statements with which I started. Burlingham's observation engenders a speculation that people may identify with their children around issues pertaining to what gives their lives meaning, which for men in our society often centers around achievement.

Burlingham's observation also suggests an explanation for the puzzle of how some men can treat their middle-aged wives only a objects who provide comfort and care, yet they can deal with young adult daughters as of potential equity and respect. I submit that they identify with daughters but not with their wives, as younger versions of themselves who possess a future that will enhance them through identification and vicarious achievement.

2. Developmental. I have discussed this in the previous section comparing the daughter's different responses to the counsel of each parent. Because the task of the adolescent is separation-indivuation, anything the mother knows is of no use to the daughter, because she has to find out for herself. Therefore, the daughter is more favorably inclined toward the father's advice.

3. Structural. As long as women are likely to have a lower educational level

than their husbands, and as long as women average 59 cents to the male wage earner's dollar, fewer women as mothers will have knowledge relevant to career guidance. Furthermore, the relative social status of parents' occupations may be present in the home. Where father's occupation has a higher social status than that of the mother, this imbalance will tend to make daughters value the counsel of fathers, as the case studies illustrated. Indeed I would assert that even if an individual woman is respected at work and at home, as long as there is still the devaluation of women in the society at large, this may cause encouragement from parents of the same attainments to have differential effects depending on their sex.

Identification by Fathers

As a result of my reflections on these data, it is clear to me that parents of both sexes are prone to identify with their children at the adolescent and young adult period. These identifications are distributed on a common continuum from lack of interest through constructive commonality, to the other extreme of over-investment which involves the inability to see the offspring as a separate person. I believe that this identification may be expressed differently because of father's more instrumental modes, and mother's more expressive modes, yet an underlying unity exists in the motives of the parents, and the perceived meaning of their behavior. I find that identification and the recognition of equivalent capacity in offspring is expressed by parents of both sexes, in the characteristic ways in which they express themselves. The continuum of investment and identification ranges from the identification which enslaves and because of insufficient recognition of the developing child's separateness, to the kind of identification which uplifts, because of its implied acknowledgement that she can become an equal. If parenting

is excessively protective, and insufficient in recognizing the daughter's potential for equity, then it constrains her. Similarly, mentors would be merely using young people to assist in their personal achievements if they did not recognize that the culmination of this process is that the mentees shall become competent in the service of their own purposes.

Signe Hammer (1975) has contributed the concept of colonizing where identification by parents is self-serving, where there is insufficient recognition of equity and separateness. There has been a great deal of discussion of symbiosis of mother and child in the first period of life. Yet at the point in their lives at which I studied these women, there are many examples found of over-investment on the part of the father to the point of inability to differentiate the daughter's goals from his own. The few instances of over-critical and excessively intense grooming for achievement were likely to be from fathers who had dropped out of college. This suggests that disappointment in oneself is likely to lead to a need for compensation through daughter's achievements. Maternal colonizing is more likely to take the form of discouraging risk-taking; paternal colonizing is likely to take the form of the assumption that the daughter wishes to go in the direction he suggests. This is, of course, a difference between parenting and mentoring: parenting takes place long before the mentee can have any conscious input into deciding the goals toward which the mentor shall help her.

These interviews suggest that paternal identification with daughters warrants further attention. Studies of "paternal engrossment," (Greenberg & Norris, 1974) demonstrate the existence of deep involvement of fathers with their newborn babies. These studies suggest that fathers do have potential for the development of strong attachments and therefore intense realtionships with their children. I submit that fathers do invest in

dyadic unity with daughters that is different in quality from the relation with others. It may indeed be easier or less conflict-laden for some fathers to identify with daughters than with sons, if they are able to be less troubled by competitive feelings towards their daughters. Identification with adult children of either sex seems to offer a chance for pride and self-renewal to middle-aged and aging parents, as is evident in the interviews.

Chodorow (1973, Chapter 12) has recently described a deficit in men's capacity for intimacy which she believes is a product of asymmetrical parental functions. I would argue that her formulation is one-sided because it defines intimacy as that which women are capable of and fails to address the unique characteristic contributions of fathers as parents. These interviews show that a special kind of meaningful relations are possible between father and daughter. Fathers may express emotion through instrumental actions. This is why even very young daughters may understand the messages which are communicated through action. When reflecting upon these interviews, one wonders about the myth of the inexpressive male. Some fathers are able to make their message clear to their daughters in a variety of ways. Therefore, just as men often must come to women in adult life to learn about intimacy, I suggest that mentors of both sexes can learn from the behavior of fathers which I have outlined. Fathers perhaps, through their more expansive insturmental activity, are more prone to sins of commission than omission. It is the fathers who can be described as "too pushy" and yet they often get positive results. Perhaps we have been too conscious of the evils of pushing children and have neglected positive effects of encouragement and showing standards and expectations that the individual's talents are respected.

On a practical level, these data and my interpretations suggest

that it is helfpul for a father to identify, at least to a moderate degree, with his daughter because this carries a message of respect via the assumption of potential equity. As Rivers, Barnett, and Baruch (1979) have also pointed out, if the father identifies with his daughter, it helps her to find a place in the world. I think that a father's failure to identify with his daughter as a person capable of achievement in her own right, is directly related to what Chodorow (1978, p.87) pointed out as the failure to emerge from the "normal naive egoism" of infancy and to view mothers as persons or subjects, instead of only objects who provide comfort and care. Therefore it would follow, that a good training to equip a boychild with the capacity to do this would be to teach him that his mother is a person whose subjectivity is worthy of respect and equity, rather than being taught through her actions and those of other adults that her purpose is only to provide comfort and care to others. I foresee that mothers who insist that sons recognize them as human beings when they reach an appropriate level of maturity may foster a generation of fathers who can promote desire for both work and love in their daughters, and husbands who are capable of experienceing love with wives who are occupational equals.

I am suggesting that there can be unity without exploitation; that human attachments, whether marital, filial, or even anaclitic at the start, can be either colonial or equitable. I believe that for parental relations with their young adult children, the identification of fathers and daughters is essentially similar to that of mothers and daughters and to that of mentor and disciple. The task of a mentor is to identify in a way that will enhance and yet permit growth; to identify and encourage without colonialism I believe is the task of the father.

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